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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of  
Governmental  
and Public Affairs

# Speeches and Major Press Releases

**November 10 - November 14, 1980**



# Speeches and Major Policy Releases

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

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**Remarks prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland before the 114th Annual Session of the National Grange, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, November 14, 1980.**

This is the last time I'll be talking to you in an official capacity, so let me begin by thanking those of you who extended me your good will, who offered me constructive criticism, and who gave the administration credit for trying.

I'm not going to waste much time looking backward...nor am I going to sour grapes the election.

The truth is, we got belted.

We got Sunbelted, Frostbelted, Cactusbelted...and Farmbelted.

And you'll be hearing hundreds of reasons why in the next few months.

I'm not going to second guess the experts, even though I've got my own ideas about why what happened happened.

It's been said that there were not enough fresh ideas, that the programs instituted in the past had either accomplished what they set out to accomplish--and really weren't needed anymore--or were out of step with the mood of the country and the realities of the times.

As I said, I am not going to second-guess the experts. But let me tell you about the department I have lived with for the past four years--USDA.

I take a great deal of pride and satisfaction in the fact that we were not satisfied with old policies, old programs, old concepts. And we did something about it.

The farmer-owned grain reserve was a brand new idea. And there's good reason why so many authorities call the reserve the most effective and the most popular farm program in half a century. It works.

The reserve gave farmers a chance to make the market work for them.

It got the government out of the business of accumulating surplus stock.

It made our country a more reliable world supplier of food and fiber.

And when record yields--across the board--threatened to crush the market last year, enough farmers put their grain into the reserve to cushion the impact.

They didn't sell when prices were down. They cashed in when prices went up.

Let me tell you something more about the reserve. I asked our economists to figure out where farm income would be this year if we didn't have the farmer-owned grain reserve. They told me it would be \$2 to \$3 billion lower.

So I'm proud of the reserve. And I hope with all my heart that the new administration will recognize its worth and keep it in place.

I'm proud of some other accomplishments these last four years.

I'm proud of our farm export program.

We've set new records--by dollar and by volume--each of the last three years, and we're going to do it again this year. We're forecasting a gain of \$8 billion, bringing the total for the year up to or beyond \$40 billion.

And there are other sources of pride and satisfaction--our credit programs, our support of cooperatives, Federal Crop Insurance, the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act and many other accomplishments.

And I'm proud of the bottom line after four years of our stewardship of American agriculture.

The bottom line is this: Those four years set an all-time record for gross farm income, net farm income, farm production, farm product consumption, and farm product export.

But I'm proudest of all that we weren't satisfied with that bottom line because we weren't satisfied with the conventional wisdom about American agriculture. We weren't complacent about the dramatic changes that were occurring, so we sought new ideas and fresh approaches.

We faced up to uncertainties about the very stability of the food and agriculture system itself. We asked the hard questions:

Have farm programs absorbed so much of the normal risk of farming that too many farmers have stuck their necks out too far?

What about the hard-working men and women operating medium-sized farms? The farms our programs don't reach as they should.

We found things happening in today's agriculture that deeply concerned us.

Farms have gotten bigger and bigger and fewer and fewer. For some crops, these expanding farms have gone past the point of peak efficiency. The extra acres don't mean per unit savings for the producer. Farms and feedlots and other sources of raw food supplies have gotten bigger partly because the processors who buy from them have gotten bigger.

Six percent of the farms--that's about 162,000--produce about 52-percent of the total value of food and fiber production in this country. They also control more than 25 percent of the agricultural assets and they have an average net worth of nearly a million dollars. When their off-farm income of about \$11,000 is counted, they have average family incomes before taxes of about \$63,200.

At the other end of the scale are about 35 percent of the farms, each with gross sales of less than \$2,500 a year. But those farms also generally have smaller debts and average off-farm income of about \$17,000 a year, putting those farm couples right around the average per capita income for two persons in this country.

But when we look at those in the middle--those who sell \$10,000 to \$40,000 worth of products a year--we see a real squeeze: less off-farm income, less net family income, fewer benefits from government programs, less likelihood of keeping the farm going.

Is this squeeze play what we want?

There's more to consider. What happens to competition in the food and agriculture system if only a few giants control production, and distribution, and marketing, and production supply? What happens to the rural community surrounded by a handful of giant farms instead of many farm families? What happens to flexibility and resilience in farming?

Early next year, Congress will review virtually all of the major farm and food programs.

What will happen? Will Congress approach the new farm bill the way farm bills have been approached for far too many years--adding a nickel a bushel here, a dime a bale there, just fine-tuning some mechanisms that are or soon will be obsolete?

That's the easy way.

That's not the way we intended to take.

All of this year and most of last year, the USDA and farm and food experts throughout the country have been carrying out the most intensive review in history of all aspects of policies and programs affecting agriculture, including tax codes, credit and regulatory programs as well as the basic commodity programs.

That review is being conducted at my request as part of the Structure of Agriculture project I launched nearly two years ago.

We want to find out who those programs help, who they hurt, and whether programs designed to help a specific group unintentionally worsen their problem or create significant problems for other groups.

These are difficult, complicated questions. And what we've learned thus far has only reinforced our concerns.

It would have been easy to go on pretending that all farms are alike, that they all have exactly the same problems, that all we have to do is come up with another quick fix for the so-called "average" farmer.

We're not going to do that. Even as we leave office, we're going to take the answers we've found to those tough, complicated questions and submit them to the new administration and the Congress for their consideration in drafting new farm legislation.

They can ignore those findings, those answers, those recommendations, of course. But I tell you this, my friends, if they do they are forfeiting a golden opportunity to frame the right kind of farm policy and draft the right kind of programs for the future of American agriculture. For they will have before them the most comprehensive data, the broadest base of analysis, ever compiled for their guidance.

At this point I want to express my personal thanks to the National Grange for the support you have given to the Structure of Agriculture project.

Your concern about the future of our food and agriculture system, your willingness to face up to the hard questions, your demonstrated commitment to fairness in farm policy and programs, and your constant



show of good will and cooperation speak well of you as an organization of genuine quality.

Indeed, I suspect that this characteristic of quality is what has kept the National Grange a vital and vigorous champion of the farm and the rural community for more than a century.

So again I thank you for the help you have given to the Structure of Agriculture project, for the wise counsel and advice you have given me during my tenure as Secretary, and for representing the best of rural America.

And now in closing, I would ask one more favor. I ask you to continue your commitment. I ask you to encourage the new administration and the new Congress to make the best possible use of the information we will be submitting to them.

And I ask something more. I ask that you give the new administration what you have the administration I represented--your good will, your cooperation, your counsel and advice.

We are in troubled times. Times that demand unity and a spirit of mutual understanding from all of us. If we are to survive these times, every effort must be made to restore a real sense of community in America.

We owe that to our country.

We owe that to ourselves.

Thank you.

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# Press Releases

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## **USDA FOOD PROGRAM FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN TAILORED MORE CLOSELY TO THEIR NEEDS**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6--Food packages provided to women and children in a U.S. Department of Agriculture supplemental food program will be more closely tailored to their differing health and nutrition needs in the future, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman said today.

The special supplemental food program for women, infants and children--WIC--provides food and nutrition education as an adjunct to health care to 2.1 million low-income women and children up to five years of age with special nutritional needs. Women reached by the program are either pregnant or breastfeeding or have recently given birth.

"Previously, WIC offered only three food packages--one for infants, one for women and children and one for children with special dietary needs," Foreman said. "Under today's final rules, the number of packages will be expanded to six, specifically geared to the dietary needs of the different participants."

The six packages will be designed for infants through 3 months; infants 4 through 12 months; women and children with special dietary needs; children 1 to 5 years; pregnant and breastfeeding women. and non-breastfeeding postpartum women.

The food packages include such items as adult and infant cereal, juice, eggs, milk and cheese, iron-fortified formula and the latest additions of dried beans, peas or peanut butter, Foreman said.

"The rules establish a maximum level of six grams of sugar per ounce of dry cereal for all cereals authorized under the program," Foreman said. "This eliminates cereals in which sugar constitutes more than 21 percent of the cereal by weight. In addition, the WIC program will continue to restrict cereals to those containing at least 45 percent of the U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance for iron."

The regulations will permit infant cereal and infant or adult juice to be introduced to infants when appropriate after 4 months of age, at the discretion of a medical professional. Under the previous rules, infant or

adult juice could be introduced to infants at any time between 0 and 12 months of age. However, under the new regulations, USDA will discourage issuance of juice before 6 months, and will stress that juice only be given from a cup, to help prevent tooth decay.

To supply more protein to pregnant and breastfeeding women and to provide an incentive to breastfeed, a choice of one pound of dried beans or peas or 18 ounces of peanut butter has been added to the food package for pregnant and breastfeeding women, Foreman said. Dried beans or peas or peanut butter have also been included in the food package for children to increase food variety and give children the benefit of added protein.

On Nov. 30, 1979, USDA published proposed rules to revise the types and quantities of supplemental foods provided under the WIC program, and invited written comments on the proposals and recommendations for alternatives.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service received 1,074 comments from state and local WIC agencies, health professionals, Congressional offices, advocacy organizations, the food industry, universities and colleges, participants and the general public. These comments were studied and considered in preparing the final regulations, Foreman said.

The final regulations will be published in the Nov. 7 Federal Register, available at most local libraries.

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# Press Releases

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## **USDA PROPOSES CHANGES IN SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 12--New rules that would reduce waste in the summer food service program and give states more flexibility in monitoring food sites were proposed today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Under the proposed rules, states would be required to set a limit on management companies." Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman said. "States would set the limits according to previous records of attendance and other information. This should reduce the number of excess meals claimed for reimbursement under the program."

The new rules also give states more flexibility on when to make pre-approval visits and program reviews, Foreman said.

"This should allow states to better target their monitoring resources and to put more emphasis on corrective actions to remedy deficiencies and follow up reviews." she said.

The rules also propose to require annual audits for sponsors receiving more than \$75,000 a year in program payments. Under current rules, sponsors receiving \$50,000 or more must be audited each year. Foreman said raising this level to \$75,000 will eliminate unnecessary audits of sponsors who have experienced minimal growth over the past few years.

"Many of these sponsors have had their programs audited because inflation raised their reimbursement to \$50,000 or more," she said. The summer food service program for children provides meals to needy children during the months that school is out. Non-profit organizations sponsor the program and are reimbursed by state agencies with federal funds. Last year 2.1 million children received meals through the program. Comments on the proposed regulations should be submitted by Dec. 12 to Jordan Benderly, director, child care and summer programs division, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250. The proposal was published in the Nov. 7 Federal Register.

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## USDA SELECTS 14 SITES FOR FOOD STAMP WORKFARE TEST

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13--Food stamp recipients will work at public service jobs in exchange for their food stamp benefits in 14 communities across the country under a U.S. Department of Agriculture pilot workfare program which will run through September 1981.

Carol Tucker Foreman, assistant secretary of agriculture, said the communities chosen to take part in the \$1.5 million workfare project are:

STATE	CITY OR COUNTY	STATE	CITY OR COUNTY
Arizona	Yuma	Michigan	Grand Rapids
Arkansas	Sebastian County Crawford County Lonoke County	Missouri	Springfield Greene County
California	San Diego County	New Hampshire	Nashua
Florida	Pinellas County	South Carolina	Greenville County Berkley County
Indiana	Evansville Vanderburgh County	Utah	Utah County
Maryland	Montgomery County	Virginia	Tazewell County

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor have operated pilot workfare programs in seven communities over the past year. Congress authorized the original projects in 1977 food stamp legislation. Legislation passed in May authorized the project to run for another year and provided funds to reimburse the communities for half their cost.

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## **PUBLIC COMMENTS ASKED ON IMPACT OF RECONSTITUTED MILK ISSUE**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13--Consumers, dairy farmers and milk handlers--and anyone else who wants to--may comment until Jan. 2 on a U.S. Department of Agriculture impact statement concerning a petition to change the pricing of reconstituted milk under all federal milk marketing orders.

P.R. Smith, USDA assistant secretary for marketing and transportation, said the petition--submitted by the Community Nutrition Institute, a processor commercially reconstituted milk from the Class I pricing provisions of milk orders.

Reconstituted milk can be made by combining nonfat dry milk and butter-fat with water. Currently, all milk products used for fluid consumption are priced at the Class I Level, the highest-priced class under federal milk orders.

Smith said that, in response to the petition, USDA had asked for public comments on whether a hearing should be held. At the same time, Smith initiated a study to determine the potential impact of the proposal on dairy farmers, consumers and milk handlers. He said the preliminary impact study does not recommend whether a hearing should be held.

Through this current comment procedure, the public will have an opportunity to evaluate the impact statement and to provide USDA with comments within 45 days on the analysis. Also, the public is invited to submit any additional proposals that might be appropriate, considering the possible economic impacts of the proposal.

Smith said this is in keeping with administration policy to provide for increased public participation in USDA's decision-making process.

Comments should be sent to the deputy administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, 3069-S., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

The impact study will be published in the Nov. 17 Federal Register. Copies of the study will be mailed to known interested parties as soon as they become available. Copies also may be obtained from the market administrator for each order or from the dairy division, AMS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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## SCIENTISTS TELL THEIR FINDINGS ON 'FAST FOODS'

BELTSVILLE, Md. Nov. 13--Millions of Americans eat at fast food outlets every day, so scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture decided to study the nutrients served at those places.

USDA research chemist Hal T. Slover, who supervised the study here for USDA's Science and Education Administration, said the study focused on the kinds and amounts of fats in the foods because nutritionists as well as the public are highly interested in food fats.

Some of those findings are.

--Although potatoes have no cholesterol and extremely small amounts of fats, a french-fry serving from one of these outlets can be expected to contain around 12 milligrams of cholesterol (indicating use of animal fat in the deep fryers). Close to 50 percent of the calories in french fries were from fat.

--Except for french fries, sizes of portions were fairly uniform. This probably is explained by the fact that the control point on size of french fry servings is the person doing the packaging, whereas strict recipes or other guidelines are followed in preparation of other items. Weight of the largest french fry serving exceeded the weight of the smallest by more than 30 percent. (All orders were for a regular-size serving.)

--Nutrient composition of simple sandwiches such as hamburgers and cheeseburgers may be substantially different from composition of specialty sandwiches. As examples, the Burger King hamburger provided 270 calories and 40 milligrams of cholesterol (averaged figures); the Burger King Double Beef Whopper provided 662 calories and 175 milligrams of cholesterol. McDonald's Quarter Pounder with cheese provided 559 calories and 110 milligrams of cholesterol. McDonald's hamburger provided 250 calories and 33 milligrams of cholesterol.

--Condiments on some of the specialty sandwiches may be nutritionally important. As examples, the amount of mayonnaise normally added to a Burger King Whopper has 159 calories, the amount of McDonald's special sauce in a Big Mac has 105 calories; and the amount of tartar sauce in a Burger Chef Skippers Treat has 81 calories.

Amounts of condiments normally added to hamburgers and cheeseburgers by all three chains contribute fewer than 20 calories. (Figures given in the accompanying table are for sandwiches without condiments.)

--Desserts did not vary as much in nutrient composition as the sandwiches. Calorie content in desserts ranged from 238 in Burger King's apple pie to 352 in Burger Chef's chocolate shake. Cholesterol content of desserts ranged from 2.5 milligrams in Burger King's apple pie to 38 milligrams in Burger King's chocolate shake. Data on fat content of shakes indicated that the main sources of fats were rendered animal fat, not butterfat or vegetable fats.

"We need better data about the fats people eat," said Slover. "Reliable data aren't as easy to get as you might think. Even if you have data on the nutrient content of foods people buy, it is difficult to relate to what they actually eat because there is so much variation in food preparation methods, eating habits and portions of meals thrown away.

"The so-called 'fast foods' offer a unique opportunity for collection of data on foods as eaten. The large chains standardize their products, which controls amounts and ingredients. In the hamburger-type outlets the entire serving is edible, which minimizes statistical problems caused by variation in eating habits."

The volume of sales in fast food chains is another factor that makes such data statistically valuable. It is estimated that the three fast-food chains from which samples were purchased for the study--Burger Chef, Burger King and McDonald's--provide about 1 percent of all the food eaten in the United States.

Samples for the study were purchased at outlets in the Maryland suburbs of the District of Columbia. "We purchased french fries, sandwiches, breakfast items, desserts--everything they had to sell except for some beverages," said Slover.

Slover is with USDA's nutrient composition laboratory here.

"Our responsibility in this laboratory is to obtain data on nutrient composition of foods and to develop improved analytical methodology," he said. "We don't recommend what people should eat and we don't make judgments as to whether diets are good or bad."



"There have been previous studies of nutrients in fast foods," Slover said, "but none so comprehensive as those presently reported. Where there is overlap, our data agree well with those previously published."

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## **KHAPRA BEETLE FOUND IN NEW JERSEY**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13--The world's most destructive stored product pest--khapra beetle--has been found in four warehouses in New Jersey, says a U.S. Department of Agriculture official.

According to Scot Campbell, Assistant Deputy Administrator for Emergency Programs for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the beetle was found during a routine inspection of a spice warehouse in Moonchie. The pest apparently was transported among chili peppers and spices shipped from India and Pakistan. After other inspections were completed, the pest was also found in a Harrison, N.J., spice company, a Newark burlap bag company and another empty warehouse in Newark.

Hold orders have been placed on the businesses to prevent the beetle's being transported to new locations. Fumigations of the four warehouses are being planned to eliminate the infestation. In addition, tracebacks are being conducted on other spice shipments and bagging operations to determine if the pest has spread further.

Khapra beetle was eradicated from the U.S. in 1966, although an infested warehouse was found and fumigated in 1978 in Linden, N. J. Losses to this prolific and destructive pest can range from two percent to total destruction in a vast variety of stored products. Left uncontrolled, they can make the surface of a grain bin come literally alive with millions of wiggling larvae eating their way to the bottom. USDA inspectors intercept the tiny brownish-black insect on imported cargo between 150 and 300 times a year and it remains a constant threat to stored grain and other stored products.

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